

HONORING MATTHEW LA PORTE

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2007

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Matthew La Porte of Dumont, New Jersey who was tragically lost during the events at Virginia Tech on Monday, April 16, 2007.

Matt was a sophomore at Virginia Tech and had already made quite a mark on campus. He was awarded an ROTC scholarship, was a member of the Corps of Cadets, played tenor drum in the Corps' Highty Tights regimental band, and was part of the Air Force Special Operations Preparation Team.

Before he began his education in Blacksburg, Matt graduated third in his class from Carson Long Military Institute in Pennsylvania. Aside from being an avid scholar, Matt was involved in numerous extracurriculars that ranged from drum and bugle corps to the baseball and soccer teams.

At home in New Jersey, Matt worked as a lifeguard at the Cresskill Municipal Pool during the summer and is remembered by neighbors as a polite and humorous young man.

I offer my deepest condolences to his parents, Barbara and Joseph La Porte, and his sister, Priscilla, and assure them that they are being remembered in our thoughts and prayers as we celebrate the impressive life of their son and brother, Matthew La Porte.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE
GREAT CATS CONSERVATION ACT

HON. HENRY E. BROWN, JR.

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2007

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, today, I am pleased to introduce, along with the distinguished gentleman from Alaska, the former Chairman of the Resources Committee, the Honorable DON YOUNG, the Great Cats Conservation Act of 2007.

This legislation is modeled after the very successful conservation statutes that Congress has enacted to assist highly endangered elephants, rhinoceros, tigers, great apes and marine turtles. It is based on the sound principle that a small amount of U.S. taxpayer assistance to range states can make a huge difference in preventing the extinction of certain landmark species.

Under my bill, a Great Cats Conservation Fund would be established and up to \$5 million per year would be authorized to be appropriated for conservation projects to assist species of cheetahs, jaguars, lions, leopards and Spanish lynx. These species were selected because they are listed as endangered under our federal Endangered Species Act, on Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and on the IUCN red list.

There is no question that populations of these wild species of big cats are in serious decline and that their long-term survival is in real jeopardy. For instance, an excellent example of the type of decline these species have suffered can be illustrated in the plight of

the majestic cheetah. At the turn of the 20th century, it was estimated that there were more than 100,000 cheetahs living in 44 African and Asian countries. Today, there are no more than 15,000 cheetahs living in small-pocketed populations in some 20 nations in Africa.

While the reasons for this precipitous decline include loss of habitat, hunting and illegal poaching of cheetahs, this unique species, which is the world's fastest land mammal, has become extinct in more than half of its traditional historic range. Due to the efforts of outstanding international organizations, like the Cheetah Conservation Fund, its slide towards total extinction has been slowed but its future remains very much clouded. The sad reality is that many landowners in countries, like Namibia, consider cheetahs a pest and they kill them to protect their livestock. This philosophy must be changed if the cheetah has any hope of survival. The Great Cats Conservation Fund would make a positive difference in financing projects to work with impacted farmers and ranchers.

Nearly 20 years ago, the Congress demonstrated farsighted international leadership and wisdom when it approved the first ever conservation fund to assist an endangered foreign flagship species. This law, known as the African Elephant Conservation Act of 1988, has been remarkably successful and all of the improvements in making these conservation grants really work have been incorporated within this legislation.

For instance, under the terms of this bill, a prospective grantee would be required to submit a detailed overview of the project, how it would be implemented, how long it would take to complete the project, a demonstration of local support and an indication of whether and how much private matching funds would be forthcoming. The Secretary of the Interior would then carefully review each project and would select those that would have the most impact on conserving endangered big cats. Furthermore, this project would be monitored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, all expenditures would be audited and an advisory group to assist the Secretary may be convened.

As a member of the International Conservation Caucus, it is my view that we have a responsibility to help save keystone species like cheetahs, leopards, lions and jaguars for future generations. In good conscience, how can we watch these species disappear forever without doing anything to assist them.

This legislation will not by itself ensure the long-term survival of these endangered big cat species. Nevertheless, it is a positive step in the right direction, it builds upon the success of a proven program and it again demonstrates to the world that the United States is serious about international wildlife conservation.

It is my hope that many of my colleagues will join with me in this effort by co-sponsoring this legislation and that the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans, of which I proudly serve as the ranking Republican member, will hold a public hearing on the Great Cats Conservation Act.

Madam Speaker, I urge support for this important wildlife conservation legislation.

COMMEMORATING THE 85TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE AMERICAN HELLENIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION

SPEECH OF

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 16, 2007

Mr. SPACE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 71, a measure commemorating the 85th Anniversary of the founding of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), a leading voice for the nation's 1.3 million American citizens of Greek ancestry and Philhellenes.

First founded in July of 1922, AHEPA focused on responding to the bigotry and racism that was targeted at Greeks in early 20th century American society. The organization also concentrated on helping Greek immigrants assimilate into society.

Today, the mission of AHEPA has evolved to reflect better times. Now, members of AHEPA concentrate on working to promote Hellenism, education, philanthropy, civic responsibility, and family and individual excellence—all of which are pillars of both the organization and Greek society.

The principles of Hellenism—humanity, freedom, and democracy—have been broadcast around the world. In fact, not surprisingly, they were the principles that America's Founding Fathers looked to for inspiration in forming a new government. In fact, American representative democracy, as we know it, is rooted in the philosophy and ethos of the Greeks.

Greek-Americans, such as myself and 1.3 million others, are fortunate to have the outreach and leadership that AHEPA provides to our community. Thousands of students have had the opportunity to take advantage of AHEPA's scholarship programs. Over the years, countless volunteer hours have been donated to worthwhile projects such as the restoration of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. With chapters across the nation, AHEPA communicates its members' positions to local and Federal legislators to ensure that Greek-American views play a role in not just the history, but also the future, of our Nation.

As a member of the Hellenic Caucus and as a Greek-American, I am proud to support H. Con. Res. 71. AHEPA deserves this recognition on the occasion of its 85th Anniversary for all that the organization has done and all that it will continue to do.

TRIBUTE TO BILL KANE

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2007

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the deeds of an outstanding American, Mr. Bill Kane, who will be recognized on April 19, 2007 for his many years of service to organized labor throughout the region.

Bill first became involved in the labor movement in 1967, as a member of the United Auto Workers Local 1612, in Philadelphia, PA while

he was working at ITE Gould. Bill worked his way up through the ranks, serving as a Shop Steward, Executive Member at large, and Bargaining Committee Member for the local.

In 1982, Bill was appointed to serve as a United Auto Workers International Representative. In this capacity, he serviced UAW Local Unions in New York and Pennsylvania as well as New Jersey. In 1989, he was chosen to serve as the New Jersey Area Director of UAW Region 9. He held this position until his retirement from the UAW in 1997.

His dedication to his union brothers and sisters did not go unnoticed, and he served as the elected Secretary Treasurer of the New Jersey State Industrial Union Council from 1989 until 1994. In 1994, he was elected to lead this group as its President.

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Bill has always found time for public service. He has served as a member of the Board of Trustees for the College of New Jersey, a member of the New Jersey Commission for National Service, a member of the State Advisory Committee of Rutgers University School of Labor Management and Relations, and a member of the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission.

As Bill retires as President of the Industrial Union Council, I know that he will continue to volunteer and help others. He will also be able to enjoy spending more time at his home in Westwood, NJ with his wife Darlene and daughter Marissa.

The job of a United States Congressman involves much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to working with and recognizing the efforts of dedicated community servants like Bill Kane.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, everyone involved in the New Jersey State Industrial Union Council, Bill's family and friends, and me in recognizing Bill Kane's outstanding service to his community.

IN HONOR OF CHARLIE ESKRIDGE

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2007

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a man who has dedicated many years of his life in respectful service to our nation and its military veterans. Charlie Eskridge has spent the past 54 years serving this country as a member of the U.S. Army and as a distinguished representative within the American Legion.

Charlie enlisted into the Army in 1953 and during his 30 years of military service, he was 1st Sergeant of a medical company and also served as a Non-commissioned Officer in Charge for several medical clinics. He joined the American Legion in 1975 and has since held a wide array of positions, always advocating for the needs of his fellow veterans.

Charlie has served the American Legion at all levels and has been a delegate to six National Conventions. As the American Legion Department Commander for California, Charlie actively represented 104,000 members. He traveled throughout the state to personally listen to the concerns and suggestions of other veterans and Legionnaires, and worked diligently to ensure that their voices were rep-

resented. Charlie has always made the interests of veterans his personal responsibility, and has ensured that support was provided to everyone with whom he spoke.

Outside of his contributions to the American Legion, Charlie is also deeply involved in his community. He is currently the President of the Protestant Men of Chapel at Fort Ord, California and a member of the Monterey County Military and Veterans Affairs Advisory Commission. Charlie has served as both President and Vice President of the United Veterans Council and even served as the President of his local Parent-Teacher Association. As a result of his immense contributions, Charlie has received the admiration of his community and has been awarded the Military Chapel's Unsung Hero Award, the Scroll of Honor, and has twice been named "Veteran of the Year" by the United Veterans Council and the Sons of the American Legion.

Most importantly Charlie has had the love and support of his wife, and partner, Rosie, who has accompanied him on his many visits with veterans throughout the state of California. After almost 50 years of marriage Charlie and Rosie have two sons, Alvin and Charlie II, one daughter, Rosemary, and five grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the House of Representatives, I would like to extend our Nation's deepest gratitude for Charlie Eskridge's service to the United States of America and for his many accomplishments for our military veterans.

THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF UNITED METHODIST HOMES

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2007

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise today to join the celebration of United Methodist Homes of New Jersey's 100 years of service to Garden State seniors. Starting in 1907 with a single home for the aged in Ocean Grove, New Jersey, today, United Methodist Homes is a network of ten homes serving more than 1400 seniors.

The flagship of this network, Bristol Glen, is nestled in Newton, in my District. It is a continuing care retirement community offering quality health care services, a wide variety of residential living conveniences, and a loving and friendly environment.

I recently visited Bristol Glen as part of my Mobile Constituent Service Hours program and had the opportunity to meet with residents and staff alike. I was struck by the extraordinary sense of community there. The emphasis is truly on well-being of the residents as a whole—catering equally to the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of all who live there.

As it enters its second century of public service throughout New Jersey, I commend United Methodist Homes of New Jersey for all it does to make the golden years truly golden for so many seniors.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JOSHUA THOMAS GALLO

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Joshua Thomas Gallo who has received the rank of Eagle Scout.

Joshua is a very studious and civically minded young man who has accomplished many goals. He has volunteered at food banks and donated blood as part of his civic commitment. Joshua has also recently been accepted to several different colleges to study medicine, thereby demonstrating his academic prowess.

Most recently, Joshua has earned the rank of Eagle Scout from troop 213. For the last 6 months Joshua has prepared himself for this momentous achievement by serving as a Life Scout and he has also earned 21 merit badges in fields such as: emergency preparedness, first aid, citizenship in community, citizenship in nation, citizenship in world, communications and environmental science.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Joshua Thomas Gallo for earning the distinguished rank of Eagle Scout. I honor his hard work and commitment in fulfilling the demanding requirements of this award. I wish him the best in his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE 85TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WOMAN'S CLUB OF DUNNELLO

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2007

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, May 10, 2007 marks the 85th anniversary celebration of the Woman's Club of Dunnellon. This outstanding charitable organization, located in Marion County in Florida's 5th congressional district, has spent the better part of the last century working on behalf of the good people of Dunnellon.

Volunteerism is an important part of many peoples lives, especially so throughout the 5th District of Florida. Many local organizations have worked very hard to make sure that the neediest amongst us have access to basic necessities like transportation to the doctor, hot meals, hospice care, day care, and providing support for our troops and their families.

The Woman's Club of Dunnellon has been at the forefront of these efforts for the past 85 years, continually finding ways to help give back to their friends and neighbors. From city beautification efforts, to educational seminars, to helping meet the needs of area residents during times of war, the woman's club has many achievements of which to be proud.

On the occasion of their 85th anniversary celebration, I would like to congratulate the women's club on their continued support and commitment to the residents of Dunnellon. Keep up the good work and know that you have my thanks for improving the lives of Marion County residents.